

Board of Directors of the Orange County United Way and the Arden Hill Hospital, and is a life member of the American Legion.

John and his lovely wife, Judy, are the proud parents of Michael (a West Point graduate), Deanna, Stephanie, Mark, Lisa and Jeffrey.

On Feb. 2, 2001, the Town of Newburgh Republican Committee at their annual Lincoln Day Dinner will honor John as their designee as the "Republican of the Year". Their recognition is long overdue, for John Hicks has long personified the ideal of political work as a public trust.

Mr. Speaker, I invite our colleagues to join with me in congratulating John S. Hicks, Esq., for this honor and for a job well done.

#### GEORGIA REGULATOR TO LEAD INVESTIGATION INTO INSURER'S RATES FOR BLACK CUSTOMERS

**HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2000*

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to commend John W. Oxendine, Georgia Insurance Commissioner who will pursue to multistate investigation of Life Insurance Co. of Georgia, which if proven true, represents a very serious matter, and subsequently needs to be dealt with. African-Americans make up a large percentage of the company's policyholders. Evidence gathered by state examiners showed the Atlanta company, a unit of Dutch INC Group NV, continued at least until recently, to charge African-Americans higher rates than whites on identical policies sold as late as the 1980's. Historically, records have shown that through the first half of the century, U.S. life insurers typically either didn't market to African-Americans or charged them higher rates based on mortality tables that showed a shorter life expectancy for African-Americans. The discriminatory treatment however, was through to have been scrapped in the early 1960's, because of U.S. Supreme Court rulings and the impact of the civil rights movement.

I submit the following article from the Wall Street Journal.

[From the Wall Street Journal Dec. 15, 2000]  
GEORGIA REGULATORY TO LEAD INVESTIGATION INTO INSURER'S RATES FOR BLACK CUSTOMERS

(By Scot J. Paltrow)

Georgia's insurance department said it will lead a multistate investigation of Life Insurance Co. of Georgia, after initial inquiries showed the company systematically had charged higher, race-based premiums to African-American customers.

Georgia Insurance Commissioner John W. Oxendine said [evidence gathered by state examiners showed the Atlanta company, a unit of Dutch ING Group NV, continued at least until recently to charge blacks higher rates than whites on identical policies sold as late as the 1980s.]

Life of Georgia was one of the companies cited in a Wall Street Journal page-one story in April, which reported that some life insurers had continued to charge higher premiums to African-Americans on small policies formally known as "industrial insurance." A former Life of Georgia actuary was quoted as saying discrimination premiums continued to be charged by the company well after

most other insurers had halted the practice in the 1960s. Florida regulators earlier this year initiated the inquiry into Life of Georgia as well as more than 25 other companies. A lawsuit on behalf of black policyholders is pending against Life of Georgia in federal court in Florida.

Life of Georgia has strongly denied the allegations. Officials at Life of Georgia, at ING's North American headquarters in Atlanta and at the parent company's headquarters in Amsterdam, didn't respond to telephone calls. In an interview in April, Life of Georgia Chief Counsel Jeffrey B. McClellan said, "our position is that no discriminatory rates were ever employed" by the company.

Historical records show that through the first half of the 20th century, U.S. life insurers typically either didn't market to African-Americans or charged them higher rates based on mortality tables that showed a shorter life expectancy for blacks. The discriminatory treatment, however, was thought to have been scrapped in the early 1960's, because of U.S. Supreme Court rulings and the impact of the civil-rights movement.

In June, Houston's American General Corp. agreed to pay more than \$215 million to settle investigations by Florida and other states and a civil lawsuit which alleged the company had continued until this year to charge higher race-based premiums on about 1.2 million policies held by blacks.

Mr. Oxendine said that based on examiners' initial findings, the Life of Georgia investigation will include all types of insurance sold by Life of Georgia. He said it was too early to estimate the number of policies or amount of money involved. [But he said African-Americans make up a large percentage of the company's policyholders.]

The investigation is being conducted on behalf of all 50 states. The company's business is licensed to sell in 30 states and has policyholders in all states, the Georgia department said.

#### HONORING THE SERVICE OF OCTAVIA LUCINDA OLIVER ROSS AS DISTINGUISHED EDUCATOR AND A COMMUNITY ACTIVIST

**HON. DONNA MC CHRISTENSEN**

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2000*

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to Octavia Lucinda Oliver Ross, who was a distinguished educator, devoted mother and community activist in my St. Croix district of the Territory of the Virgin Islands.

Octavia Ross was born into and became a part of an outstanding family educational legacy in the Virgin Islands. Her late father, Emanuel Benjamin Oliver was also a teacher, and a school on the island of St. Thomas bears his name. After teaching at the Federal Nursery School, Octavia Ross began her career as an instructor in public school system. She served as a teacher at almost all grade levels, elementary as well as secondary and worked at the junior high and intermediate grade levels. Most of her teaching career was spent as a first grade teacher at the Frederiksted Public Grammar School and the Claude O. Markoe School. Mrs. Ross enrolled in various training sessions with the Polytechnic Institute of St. Croix and pursued additional training at Inter American University in Puerto Rico.

On January 25, 1964, Octavia Ross obtained her Bachelor of Science Degree from Hampton University, followed by a period in which she did post graduate work in Supervision and Administration. Upon returning to St. Croix she was instrumental in initiating and directing the Bilingual/Bicultural and the Academically-talented Programs. Mrs. Ross became an assistant principal at the Charles H. Emanuel and the Alexander Henderson Schools. She became the first principal of the Evelyn Williams Elementary School, remaining there until her retirement at the completion of forth two years of meritorious service in the field of education. Octavia Ross, having been a star athlete in her youth, also instructed handicraft and athletics. There are many who strongly feel the sentiment that she devoted her life to the children of St. Croix as a teacher, assistant principal and principal.

Octavia Ross also made varied and vast contributions to the social well being of the Virgin Islands' community. Athletic activities during her youth caused her to participate in numerous inter-island meets, which may have been the beginning of her activity in the community. She has been credited with carrying the banner in the Business and Professional Women's Club, serving as both the local and state president. She was a delegate at the International Business and Professional Women's convention in Houston, Texas. In 1974, she received the Woman of the year Award. Octavia Ross was also the recipient of the Frederiksted Business and Professional Women's Achievement Award. In 1978 she was named the Mother of the Year Award by the Frederiksted Club and later received their Woman of Achievement Award. Octavia Ross was listed in the 1977 International "Who's Who in the West Indies, Bahamas and Bermuda," V. I. Section—Personalities of the Caribbean and was also listed in the 1979 edition of World "Who's Who Dictionary of International Biographies" and received the Paul Harris Fellow from the Rotary Club of St. Croix West.

The Governor of the Virgin Islands described her as having a graceful demeanor, a professional integrity and ladylike deportment that made her an exemplary and model teacher. Further, he stated that not only has Mrs. Ross made a significant contribution to the Virgin Islands as an educator in her own right, but also in the contributions of her offspring in the administrative, legislative, educational, legal, financial, civic, military and industrial areas of the community. Not surprisingly, Octavia Ross was a dedicated member of her church, the Saint Paul's Anglican Church, in addition to being a member of Episcopal Church Women's Organization and Member of the Vestry.

Octavia Ross was appreciated by the many whose lives she touched. Besides her husband Rupert W. Ross, Sr., she leaves to mourn her seven children: Rupert, Edgar, Raymond, James, Edward, Janice and Jewel; two step children, Randolph and Judy-Ann; fourteen grand children, fourteen great grand children; and a community recovering from her sudden passing. On behalf of the Congress of the United States of America, I salute Octavia Lucinda Oliver Ross for her dedicated service to her profession and the Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands. I thank her husband Rupert, her seven children, two step children, fourteen grand children, fourteen great grand children

and a grateful community for sharing her with us.

TRIBUTE TO FATHER HILARY CONTI

**HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2000*

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the deeds of a remarkable person from my district, Father Hilary Conti of Clifton, New Jersey, who celebrated on Saturday, October 28, 2000 fifty years of service and leadership in Clifton and round the country. It is only fitting that he be honored, for he has a long history of caring, generosity and commitment to others.

Father Hilary Conti was recognized for his many years of leadership in Clifton, which I have been honored to represent in Congress since 1997, and so it is appropriate that these words are immortalized in the annals of this greatest of all freely elected bodies.

Paul Karieakatt chronicled the history of Father Conti's service. As he noted, this year marks the 50th anniversary of Father Hilary Conti's priestly ordination. For fifty years he has engaged himself in the vineyard of the Lord, as a monk and as a priest. This is a truly special achievement.

Father Hilary was born in Fabriano, Italy on May 12, 1925 to Natale and Carmela Conti as their sixth child. Although it was filled with hard work, Father Conti enjoyed a beautiful childhood. On one occasion during WWII, all he had to eat was a discarded carrot. he worked as farmer, and fondly recalls those early days. In his own words he said, "My father went to look not for the lost sheep, but for the lost shepherd. It did not take him too long to find me."

Father Conti joined the monastery as an aspirant on September 29, 1938, made his novitiate in 1943 and his simple profession on October 1, 1944. On October 28, 1950, he was ordained a priest at St. Scholastica in Detroit, Michigan. As a student he helped to found *Inter Fratres* magazine.

Father Hilary taught for a short time at Mercy High School in Detroit. He has always been an active and involved leader. The time spent working in Michigan instilled in Father Conti the attributes necessary for him to become a stellar force in the community. It was the small steps in the beginning of his career that taught him the fundamentals that would make him a role model to the people that he now serves.

Later he took upon an even greater challenge and pioneered the establishment of a small monastery in Clifton. It is known as the Holy Face Monastery. It nourishes spiritual needs of the soul, gladdens the heart and inspires all those who visit. Of the works of art at the Holy Face Monastery the Shrine of Our Lady of Tears is Father Hilary's favorite. His late close friend, Mr. Canepa, created this masterpiece.

To describe in his own words his accomplished life, Father Conti wrote, "I planted many oak trees and saw them growing big and tall; now I am 70 years old, so I am pre-occupied about the future of the monastery." This shows his enduring love and relentless

commitment. Many people come to the monastery to search for the meaning of life, healing, peace and consolation.

Father Hilary has traveled around the country conducting seminars and talks explaining the Holy Shroud of Turin and its spirituality. He has also worked in Rome with many scientists, doctors and theologians on the shroud. He recently produced a video that explains the spirituality of the shroud.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, Father Hilary's fellow monks, supporters, the Holy Face Monastery, the City of Clifton and me in recognizing the outstanding and invaluable service to the community of Father Hilary Conti.

EUROPEAN UNION

**HON. DOUG BEREUTER**

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2000*

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, Benjamin Franklin once wrote in Poor Richard's Almanac, "Don't throw stones at your neighbors, if your own windows are glass." This sage advice written in 1736 is still current today and certainly applicable to those across the Atlantic who have focused on the problems in Florida and mocked the United States electoral system. While the closeness of the vote in Florida resulted in exercise of a constitutional process in the U.S. that has not had to have been used before, the challenges ahead for the European Union as it tries to integrate new members and address its own internal voting system are just beginning and may be far more difficult to resolve. In that regard, this Member recommends to his colleagues I submit the following editorial published by the Omaha World Herald on December 9, 2000, on this subject into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

IF THE SHOE FITS, EU SHOULD WEAR IT

The Florida vote-could mess has triggered a month-long eruption of contemptuous tut-tutting from European leaders and commentators. Finger-wagging scolds from London, Paris and other centers of European enlightenment have taken particular aim at the Electoral College.

One columnist grumped in The Times of London: "What moral authority would a man have to hold his finger over the nuclear trigger when he owed his office not to a majority but the byproduct of a bankrupt electoral college?"

A German writer made do by simply calling the Electoral College "idiotic."

Scratch those European criticisms hard enough, however, and you uncover what could be called, at best, inconsistency and at worst hypocrisy.

It turns out that one of Europe's most revered institutions, the European Union, has long governed itself by the very principles associated with the Electoral College. That is, the decision-making process for the EU, an association of 15 European countries linked by close economic and political ties, is structured so that small countries are given tremendous added weight and, thus, influence.

The best illustration is shown by comparing the EU's largest member, Germany, to its smallest, Luxembourg. Germany, with 82 million inhabitants, has a population some 205 times that of Luxembourg's of

400,000 (which, coincidentally, is about the size of Omaha's municipal population).

If the seats that Luxembourg and Germany have on the Council of Ministers, one of the EU's governing bodies, were assigned in proportion to the two countries' actual populations, Luxembourg would control two seats and Germany would control 410. Instead, Luxembourg has two seats and Germany has 10.

The advantage given to smaller states is even greater in another EU institution, the European Commission. There, the five largest countries each have two seats, while the rest have one. That arrangement resembles the situation in the U.S. Senate, where small states are each accorded precisely the same number of seats as big states.

The EU gives its smallest members one more advantage, allowing any country, regardless of its size, to exercise a veto on decisions involving taxation and foreign policy.

In short, if Europeans deride the Electoral College's rules as "idiotic," they should say the same about those of the European Union.

In recent days the EU's governing rules have been under negotiation as part of the organization's plans to expand its membership to former members of the Soviet bloc and other candidate nations. Representatives from the EU's smallest members have put up quite a fight to defend the prerogatives they've traditionally enjoyed, and protesters have demonstrated on behalf of the same cause, although it appears some watering down of the small-state advantages will ultimately result.

If European commentators want to understand many of the arguments behind the Electoral College, they don't have to look to America. The debate over those principles is taking place in their own back yard.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE GEORGE C. PAGE

**HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2000*

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, the City of Los Angeles recently lost a generous philanthropist, Mr. George C. Page. Mr. Page was the founder of the George C. Page Museum of La Brea Discoveries and was a generous donor to Children's Hospital and Pepperdine University. I would like to take this opportunity to honor the contributions Mr. Page made to our community, and note in particular how influential his museum has been on the education of children of Los Angeles. I'd also like to submit for the record a copy of an article the Los Angeles Times ran on November 30, shortly after Mr. Page's death.

[From the Los Angeles Times, Nov. 30, 2000]

OBITUARY: GEORGE C. PAGE; PHILANTHROPIST  
FOUNDED LA BREA MUSEUM

(By Myrna Oliver)

George C. Page, who hitchhiked to Los Angeles as a teenager with \$2.30 in his pocket, made a fortune with his Mission Pak holiday fruit gift boxes and land development and then donated millions to house treasures of the La Brea Tar Pits, which fascinated him, has died. He was 99. The founder of the George C. Page Museum of La Brea Discoveries in Hancock Park, he was also a major benefactor of Children's Hospital, Pepperdine University and other institutions that aid young people. He died Tuesday night in